

March 11, 2013

Planning and Development Committee  
Senator Steve Cassano, co-chairman  
Representative Jason Rojas, co-chairman

**Re: Raised Bill #960, Establishing Historic Preservation Commissions**

I am fortunate to live in New Britain and serve on the City of New Britain Historic Preservation Commission. The other members and I are just taking our first steps, just feeling our way, but we have good guidance from people who, following Hartford's example, established under the Home Rule Act an Historic Preservation Commission. We, with the City of Hartford, are on the cutting edge, but many other cities and towns in Connecticut have yet to follow. Perhaps they fear being cut, for it is my understanding that there are possible legal problems that were not addressed under the Home Rule. It is my further understanding that **Raised Bill #960, Establishing Historic Preservation Commissions** does address these legal problems, thus paving the way for others in Connecticut to move forward, without fear of possible cutting, and establishing their own Historic Preservation Commissions.

New Britain has a proud history of hardware manufacturing, the development of public education, and immigration from diverse parts of the world. Other towns and cities have their own unique histories. In today's world of increasing detachment, isolation, and fear, we yearn for connection, for roots, for "friends." Our lives and communities are enriched by historic neighborhoods and historic buildings. They help us to move, psychologically, from "Where are we?" to "Here we are."

It is with these ideas in mind that I strongly urge your support for **Raised Bill #960, Establishing Historic Preservation Commissions**.

Thank you for your consideration.

Frank Self  
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Chair, City of New Britain Historic Preservation Commission